THE PARISH MESSENGER

A PERSONAL VISITOR TO THE PARISHES

APRIL, 1962

SELKIRK, MANITOBA

HE IS RISEN!

by PASTOR DONALD JOHNSON, MINNEOTA

The direction we look is important. If a stranger were to visit our land and see only the rolling farm lands but not the booming cities or only the newly developed suburbs but not the slums, he would not see nor understand us as we are. How we view something is important. We sometimes have to change our positions to enrich our vision. A mountain range appears in new splendor when viewed from an airplane after viewing the peaks from a valley looking up. So it is with Easter. What we see in Easter is important. It determines the elements that constituted our faith. In what direction must we look?

Easter beckons us back into time. We see this human flesh nailed to the cross, hear his cry, "I thirst" as it is choked from parched lips, bearing pain on his body and a shameful death. Jesus, our brother! But we also see the



empty tomb, the voice of the angel, "He is not here, he has risen." Jesus is more than our brother. He is our God.

Is this all you see in Easter? This in itself may mean only a lovely picture, a pious tale recalled. Easter must turn our eyes in another cirection — to the future. On Easter morning we lift our heads high as we confess . . . "I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come." The resurrection of Jesus becomes an earth shattering experience for every Christian when we see in Him the pledge, the guarantee of our own resurrection to eternal life. "For if we have been united with Him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united in a resurrection like his." (Rom. 6:5). Unless we look to the future Easter becomes dead history.

Yet, must not Easter be more than looking to the past and to the future. If everything lies either in the past or in the future we feel left out, alone, tossed about in midstream. Somehow all this must be made present, must touch me where I am. Yes, we must see Easter in the present. In the Eucharist on Easter morning we bring bread and wine in humble thanksgiving. As we kneel at the altar we find ourselves raised to the foot of the cross. "The body of Christ given for thee." Here is the same body that hung on the cross. We find ourselves at the

(Continued on Page 11)

NEWS FLASHES-

The Icelandic Lutheran congregation in Vancouver held their annual meeting on January 24, 1962 in the lower auditorium of the church. Following a delicious smorgasbord style dinner served to a capacity attendance, the meeting was called to order and chaired by the president of the congregation, Mr. G. J. Hinrikson. Members of the church board and board of Deacons were all re-elected. The resignation of Rev. E. S. Brynjolfsson was received with regret, and tribute paid to the service he had rendered during his nine year pastorate. Tribute was also paid to the choir, and its leader Mr. L. H. Thorlaksson, and to the W.A. for their fine work.

Rev. Ingthor Indridason has resigned as pastor of the Langruth parish and has accepted the call to serve the Icelandic congregation in Vancouver. He began his work there early in March. God bless him in his ministry there.

The auditorium of the new Riverton Collegiate lends itself beautifully to worship services, as the Riverton Congregation discovered. With the onset of cold and the difficulties in heating the church, the congregation moved

THE PARISH MESSENGER

Official Publication of the Icelandic Synod

Editor: Rev. W. M. Bergman, Selkirk

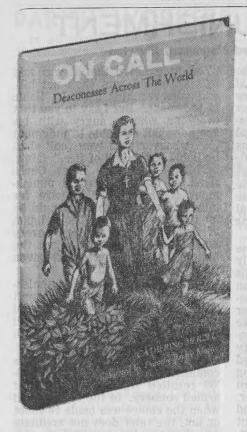
Printed by Vopni Press Ltd.
Portage la Prairie

into the auditorium for Sunday School and Services.

The auditorium, modern in design, has served well. Mr. Clarence Mayo built a full-sized portable altar, a four-foot cross of dark color, and candlesticks decorated with brass fish and chi rho. The dark cross, outstanding against the beige curtain of the stage, lends the auditorium a worshipful atmosphere. A piano, purchased by the school board, takes the place of the organ. The Riverton congregation is grateful to the school board for the opportunity of renting this fine new building as a temporary place of worship.

The Trinity congregation of Point Roberts has completely redecorated its church building, inside and out. Services are held every first and third Sundays of the month, conducted by Pastor Loreen of Augustana Church in Vancouver. He also meets with the confirmation class before each service. The Junior Choir sings at each service.

Upon request of some people of the Homer district, Pastor Mag-nuson of the Riverton Lutheran Parish has begun to conduct services of worship and to hold open meetings for discussion and showing of films in that area. Homer is located about 18 miles northwest of Riverton, a farming community with most people of German background. Response to the services and meetings has been excellent, with most of the people participating. All activities are held in the school or homes. It is a gratifying experience to serve people who otherwise would be unable to hear the Word of God.



New Book for Young People

ON CALL — DEACONESSES ACROSS THE WORLD

by Catherine Herzel

is the first book of the midtwentieth century to be written in English on this subject and specifically for young people. It is ecumenical in scope. It is historical and documentary, yet full of human interest experiences of deaconesses who are serving today. It is an excellent book, not only for young people to read, but for church school teachers to use as supplementary material with their classes, for Luther Leaguers and United Lutheran Church Women with their related programs, for pastors with their catechetical classes. Available in all Lutheran Book Stores. \$2.75. ORDER NOW.

ANNOUNCEMENT

The next orientation for Associates In Deaconess Service (AIDS) will be held at the Lutheran Deaconess House in Gladwyne, Pennsylvania, from May 13 to June 2, 1962. Applications are now being received.

A second orientation has been tentatively scheduled for August, 1962. Special emphasis is being given to the needs of the church for women with college backgrounds and professional preparation or with outstanding competency in business. Workers are needed also as institutional housemothers and as housekeeping assistants.

AIDS are women who are free of family obligations, ready to serve for one year without salary but with expenses paid, experienced in business, homemaking or professional activities and eager to give their talents to the work of the church as a thankoffering.

For further information write to: The AIDS Program
Board of Deaconess Work
2900 Queen Lane
Philadelphia 29, Pa.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

by Pastor Richard Magnuson, Riverton

Christian people are asked to state their convictions on capital punishment. These convictions are expressed in two ways, either through consideration and resolutions by congregations and general church bodies, or through citizens who take action through representative political channels.

What is the Christian attitude toward capital punishment? The question arouses great emotional feelings pro and con, but emotions do not represent Christianity.

The Old Testament gives us the revelation of God's Law for a holy life and the knowledge of His people through which salvation would come. Taking the Old Testament as authority and guide for dealing with our social ills, we would be busy executing and en-forcing justice. The death penalty is commanded for pre-meditated murder (Exodus 21-22), striking father or mother, selling stolen goods, cursing father or mother, and keeping an ox that gores and then kills a man. The punishment was designed to fit the offense. Through the Old Testament religious and civil law was not really separated. Jesus Christ was given the sentence of death on the basis of Jewish Law against blasphemy (Matt. 26:63-66). By the same law Stephen was stoned by the Jews with approval from Saul.

However, we face the problem of capital punishment as Christians, not as Jews living before the time of Christ. We understand the Old Testament now in terms of Jesus' teaching. The fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," warns the potential murderer of the divine character of life, and the state against systematic execution. Jesus interpreted the fifth commandment in simple language:

"You have heard that it was said to men of old 'you shall not kill, and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment." But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment... whoever says 'you fool' shall be liable to the hell of fire." (Matt. 5:21-22). Therefore, if as Christians we feel that capital punishment is the proper penalty for murder, every one of us should be on trial for his life. The religion of Jesus Christ condemns every man to death, then it raises the believer to a new sense of forgiven fellowship with God.

The argument for capital punishment is (a) people do not commit crimes for fear of punishment, and (b) therefore, since we fear death more than anything else, the death penalty will prevent crime.

Three out of five capital crimes committed in California from 1938-'53 resulted from interruption of armed robbery. In the split second when the choice was made to shoot or not, the thief does not meditate on the penalty involved in his actions. The man who plans the murder of his wife for several weeks or months does not plan to be caught, thus the penalty makes little difference.

It is the certainty of punishment that counts, not its severity. The death penalty is less likely to be imposed in Canada as in California but the figures speak for themselves. In 1953 276 homicides were reported to California police — 92 were sent to prison, 14 were sentenced to death, and only eight were executed. When a murderer or potential murderer can see that there is a 99.9 per cent chance of not getting maximum punishment, what is there to fear at least in

(Continued on Page 5)

PARISH WORKERS SOUGHT

In all parts of Canada and the United States men and women are being sought as parish workers. Duties include congregational visiting and contacting prospective new members, supervising church schools, routine administrative and various other related duties.

In addition to a liberal arts degree, parish workers should have further study in the Christian faith. Interested persons should contact the Synod Lay Workers Placement Service or LWP headquarters in the Board of Higher Education, 231 Madison Avenue, New York 16, New York.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT (CONCLUSION)

(Continued from Page 4) terms of being executed? If capital punishment were to be a deterrent its use would have to be broadened and the penalty made more certain. Not even the supporters of this apporters of punishment

would support this.

What happens when the fear of capital punishment is completely removed by abolition? Five states that were as nearly alike as possible were selected for comparison in this respect: Those without capital punishment, Rhode Island, Michigan, and Wisconsin; and those with capital punishment, Connecticut and Indiana. In every case the result was the same, a decline in the homicide rate between 1939 and 1946 (Karl F. Schuessler, The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Nov. 1952). This type of punishment is neither a treatment, preventative or cure for capital crime. The wound of grief and breach of justice cannot be healed by the bang of a trap door, the sizzle of an electric chair or deadly mist in a gas chamber. These are repulsive to think of and less effective than even the whip because the executed can never repent or make any constructive contribution to whatever society he lives in.

Because capital punishment is not in harmony with the spirit and teachings of the Gospel does not mean that our church should not be concerned with law and order. There is the mistaken supposition that when this type of punishment is abolished, murder will run rampant and lynching may break out. This has not happened. Nor would prisons overflow. In the "sinful state" of California in 1954 there were about 15.800 felony prisoners in prison and about 30 in Death Row at San Quentin. The actual execution costs the state only about \$200 but prolonged legal battles millions involve sometimes dollars to see a man through the courts and to execution (Carlyal Chessman is an example).

Capital punishment, therefore, pays no "debt to society" nor is it a deterrent to crime nor is it economical. Its motive is to equal the suffering a man has inflicted on others. This is out of harmony with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Capital punishment as a form of permanent detention is highly impractical because human cannot be corrected when a man is dead. Christians then face not only the task of removing worthless laws but also attempting to develop and enforce laws that fit 20th century living.

This item will probably come before the Synod again this year since it was referred to the Social Action Committee at the last meeting. See the minutes of the 77th annual Convention of the Icelandic Synod, pages 39 and 65.

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

Given by Rev. H. S. Sigmar at the Mountain High School Reunion

It may strike you that what I am about to do is not in harmony with the festivity of this occasion. Such would not surprise me, for I have struggled with the discordant note that a memorial address seems to sound in the midst of a banquet that reunites old friends in celebration and in song.

There is simply no way to escape the verdict of tragedy that surrounds the death of these young people who graduate from Mountain High School only to meet an untimely end in terms of violence or dread disease. No euphemism of mine may dare detract from the stark reality of the abiding sorrow wrought by circumstances that snuffed out the fulfilment of their life's rich promise. May no sentimentalities of yours or mine seek to obliterate the inequity of talent, training, and the longing to live being extinguished by irretractible facts. Certainly no words could ever dispel the aching emptiness of those most deeply bereaved — nothing within the horizons of this world in which we live.

Although we dare not gloss over these facts that simple honesty would face, though we love our friends too much to eulogize their tribulations, we are yet able to accord them our affectionate remembrance in this joyous gathering, without callous indifference or morbid despair, because of the Christian hope to which we are

heirs.

"Life is real, life is earnest And the grave is not its goal. 'Dust thou art to dust returnest' Was not spoken of the soul."

Nevertheless there is a sickening feeling of waste that grips the mind of even the staunchest believer when life is wrested from

the young. School completed; struggle ended, preparation for life consummated. Then just as life is ready to begin, it is forcibly taken away. But even though this view is widely held within the Christian Community, although it tempts the most consecrated followers of Christ, I submit that it is shortsighted to say the least. School is not only preparation for life; school is life. And furthermore, all of life is but a school, preparing us for what truly is our destiny. Death comes not until we cease to study and to learn. And graduation is the day when this old world shall end for each of us. Commencement, when we hear His Voice; "Well Done." This period of consciousness which we call life is but the second stage "in utero," as we develop in the womb of Mother Earth. But this time we take part in our formation, as by the power of faith we help determine the course our life shall take. not in gain nor in longevity, but in the quality of that which shall endure beyond the flesh. In the Creator's economy time holds not the vast importance that it has for earthbound creatures. For Him a day is a thousand years, and a thousand years but a day.

While this portion of the school reunion is in honor of our deceased schoolmates, it is for the benefit of us, the living, that we remember them. Our thoughts and prayers, no matter how sincere, can in no wise change their destiny, nor can He be affected in Whose Hands we leave them with all confidence. But this moment of memorial can be significant for those of us who are privileged to be still enrolled in the school of life. Per-

(Continued on Page 7)

Canadian Lutheran World Action Appeal Went Over Jop

WINNIPEG (CLC) — The Canadian Lutheran World Action appeal went over the top in 1961. The 685 congregations participating in the Canadian Lutheran Council gave \$79,048 to this world wide program of assistance to immigrants and relief to refugees.

The unbudgeted income of \$1,997 pushed the total to \$81,045, or 100.5 per cent of the goal.

1961 was the third year in succession that Canadian Lutherans surpassed their CLWA goal, according to Dr. Earl J. Treusch, who (Continued on Page 12)

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

(Continued from Page 6) haps the sad shortness of their lives may yet bring us to with the seriousness of life and its everlasting consequences. God grant that we may value our opportunities more constructively; that we may appreciatively employ the freedom for which some of them gave up their lives; that we may soberly face the fact that life is real and earnest and that goals are of enduring significance; that we may realistically fight the good fight of faith to the end that He may be enthroned in this world, Who destroyed life's final enemy.

That death is swallowed up in victory is the affirmation of Christian faith. But not only has He destroyed the power of death and made of it the gate of Heaven, He has removed its bitter sting for those who mourn. And although we are in death in this cold and dying world, we not only have the right, but the commission and the means to be of good cheer for He has overcome the world. Love's command as well as faith's demand is that we rejoice in the Lord always: "And again I say rejoice."

This gathering is a parable of life and all its meaning. In the midst of a threatened world with dark clouds gathering on every horizon, we laugh and sing together. Despite the darkness and disaster that surrounds us, the tribulation, defeats and disappoint-

ments we have all experienced or have in store, we dance to bright and happy tunes. Though all of the enemies to life lurk menacingly in shadows "I fear no evil for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff comfort me." Even the last enemy of man is exposed and derided for his impotence as we declare that we are conquerors through Him that loved us so that neither death nor life nor anything else in creation can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And we experience at this delightful banquet the truth of the psalmist's confidence: "Thou preparest a Table before me in the presence of mine enemies Thou anointest my head with oil. my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. May our little reunion tonight foreshadow the gathering of the dispersed Christian family in Our Father's House of many mansions.

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul

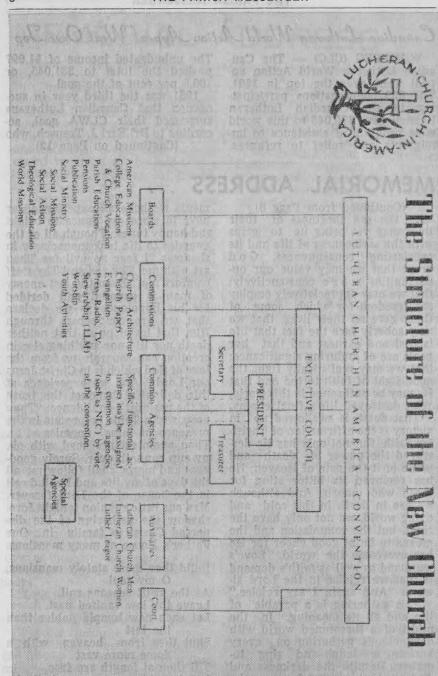
As the swift seasons roll.

Leave thy low vaulted past.

Let each new temple nobler than
the last

Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast

Till thou at length are free, Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea.



An Answer to Prayer

Laymen — pastors, too — pray that churches merge, unite. "Why not," we have lamented, "get

together?"

Now, it is coming to pass four Lutheran Church bodies are uniting into the Lutheran Church in America. Now, it is up to us to make a response that fully indicates our gratitude to God for answering our prayer.

An appropriate response is being planned by providing a "dowry gift" for the LCA.

Every synod, every congregation should take steps now - early in the year — to provide for the "dowry gift" so it will be on hand when needed.

What a witness such an action will make! What an opportunity such a gift will provide for more preaching of the gospel! What a joy such an event will be to every member of the new church!

Now is the time for every ULCA congregation to set about its task that is, providing its part of the 1962 ULCA budget, including the

"dowry gift."

Discuss the "dowry gift" at your next church council meeting. Suggest steps to be taken in your

parish.

Plan now to make your response, a response that truly expresses gratitude for a prayer answered in the unity of the church.

Just What is "Our Dowry Gift"?

It's an opportunity to lift the marriage (the merger of AELC, Suomi, Augustana, ULCA) above shoe-string existence and bring to the union resources to meet the responsibilities of life together.

The "dowry gift" of \$2,642,500 will enable the new officers of the new church to set operations in motion as quickly as possible on a

vast scale.

Boards will move — the home mission activities of the merging churches will be transplanted to a new American Missions headquarters in Chicago . . . the foreign mission operations will be brought together in the New York Church House in a new Board of World Missions . . . the Parish Education operations will be unified in Philadelphia . . . the Board of Pensions will begin life in the new church in Minneapolis. And so on right across the full range of life in the church.

Temporary subsidies have been assured for institutions of higher education . . . costs must be borne for the constituting conventions of 30 new synods . . . and "carry-over" funds will be needed from the end of 1962 to the beginning of 1963 when benevolence receipts from congregations and synods fall short of the level needed to meet obligations in the first quarter of 1963.

One thing is certain — we cannot go to the "wedding feast" empty handed.

Parish News Flash

On Saturday, Feb. 10, the annual Evangelism and Stewardship joint conference was held in First Lutheran Church. It was sponsored by the Icelandic Synod in conjunction with Augustana and Synod of Western Canada. Forty-five people, representing fourteen congregations were present, of which number twenty-four people from seven congregations were from our Synod.

"These My Brethren ..."

This boy is a patient at the Lutheran hospital in Jerusalem.

Just to sit on mother's lap helps a lot when a boy is sick. But Canadian, American and other Lutherans are providing additional help — a large, modern hospital



on the Mount of Olives, together with a staff of skilled doctors and nurses. The 284-bed Augusta Victoria Hospital, one of the largest in the Middle East, is operated by the Lutheran World Federation, with a large annual grant from the United Nations.

Medical care is brought to outlying villages by three mobile clinics. Recently a mobile dental clinic started making the rounds.

Lutheran hospital and medical care have played no small part in helping a million Arabs stay alive and healthy throughout their 13 years as refugees. The fact that no epidemic has ever broken out speaks highly not only of Lutheran medical work, but also of the various feeding, clothing, and sanitation programmes.

In one camp there are 40,000 people who are wearing warm

LWA clothing.

Lutherans are asked to support Lutheran World Action with their prayers and gifts. As you ponder how much you should give, keep in mind both the sick child in the picture, and the Lord who said, "Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

NEWS FLASHES-

Calvary Lutheran Church, Seattle, is making the necessary preparations, with hopes of breaking ground in June for their new church building. Some equipment and furnishings have already been obtained. The worship service on February 25 was conducted by the Luther Leaguers in the absence of Pastor Nelson, who was in hospital recovering from surgery.

The Rev. Walter Becker represented our Synod at a Stewardship Conference in Detroit, from Feb. 19-22. Mr. Haldor Bjarnarson, chairman of the Synodical Evangelism Committee, attended the Pittsburgh Conference for Synodical Chairmen, and reported on this meeting to the Stewardship Evangelism Seminar.

NEWS FLASHES

The seemingly never ending and time consuming problem of notifying people of meetings, etc., has been solved in Riverton. Leslie Gislason, 19 years old and confined to the wheelchair, has taken over the job as manager of a "communication centre." She telephones all members involved at certain meetings, inquires about transportation facilities to and from the meetings. and passes on information to the people and to the pastor. She is a vital link and certainly does her job par excellence.

A Young People's Rally, sponsored by the Church Vocations Committees of the Icelandic, Augustana, and Western Canada Synods, took place on February 25 at St. Peter's Church, Winnipeg. Beginning at 3 p.m. with a sing-song and ending at 8 p.m. with a worship service, the session proved interesting, entertaining, and instructive for the large number of youth in attendance. The turnout was excellent, with over 100 young people present to hear Professor Freytag of Luther Seminary, Saskatoon, interpret the place of the church in vocational consideration. and the great challenge and need in the church today for young people who are willing to train and use their brains in church-related occupations. Three discussion groups were formed dealing with applied science, humanities, and technical skills, with each person sitting in on the group which interested him or her.

Those in charge of arrangements expressed great satisfaction with the event, and considered it highly successful.

Pastor and Mrs. Richard Magnuson of Riverton, welcomed a third daughter into their family. Little Ruth Elaine was born in Winnipeg December 31, 1961.

On February 1st a meeting of the women of the Selkirk Lutheran Church was held to re-organize into one women's group. Members of the three existing groups — the Senior and Junior Ladies Aids and the Women's Fellowship - and other women of the congregation were present.

The Riverton Lutheran Congregation is beginning to face the challenge of building a new house of worship. Upon recommendation of LLM, a stewardship teaching mission will be conducted this spring. In the years to follow, emphasis will shift to a building fund drive. At present the building fund has over \$4,000 through private donations and memorials. The Lutheran Ladies Aid has begun an organ fund as a very fine testimony of interest in a new church.

HE IS RISEN!

(Continued from Page 1) empty tomb. Here is the body that reigns in glory. But the path to the altar also takes us into the future. Here is the One who is to come again. Here is our own personal resurrection for He is the resurrection and the life.

To see Easter we look to the present. In a glorious way that no pen or tongue can express we see the cross, the tomb and His coming again. We see Jesus who is like us, yet unlike us; human yet divine. Heaven touches mortal earth and transforms it.

This Easter morning we seek Jesus of Nazoreth. May we be cleansed by His blood on Calvary, strengthened and transformed by His resurrection and filled with Thanksgiving as we look for His coming again when we shall be like Him. All this that we can see in Easter awakens us anew to God's merciful love for us.

CLWR Executive Secretary

Mr. George Keil has been appointed Executive Secretary of Canadian Lutheran World Relief, succeeding Rev. Clifton Monk. Although new to this part time office, Mrs. Keil has been associated with CLWR for 16 years, as comptroller for the last 11 years. He has also been with the Canadian Pacific Railway's Department Immigration and Colonization for 21 years, as supervisor since 1958. He spent 1949 to 1950 in Germany, directing operations at CLWR's Bremen office. There his job consisted of helping people make arrangements to emigrate to Canada. He resides with his family in the Winnipeg suburb of West Kildonan.

LWA Appeal

(Continued from Page 7) is Executive Director of the Council and Director of the CLWA appeal.

Just over half of the proceeds, \$42,000 was sent to Geneva, Switzerland, toward the Lutheran World Federation's world-wide \$3 million program, best known of which is the relief and rehabilitation carried on among the one million refugees in each of Hong Kong and Jordan. The remainder of the proceeds went to support the Lutheran Port Workers in Halifax and Montreal, and to CAN-ADIAN WORLD RELIEF, which counsels immigrants and ships Canadian clothing and food to refugees.

Opportunities Through the Lay Workers Placement Service

A North Carolina man found work as administrative assistant to the pastor of a Pennsylvania church. A Long Island United Lutheran churchman was chosen office manager of Augustana's Upsala College in New Jersey.

A woman seeking secretarial work in the church "within one hundred miles" of Nazareth, Pennsylvania, became parish secretary in East Orange, New Jersey. A husband and wife from New Jersey became houseparents at a children's home in Ohio.

These are just four of the placements made during the past six months by the Lay Workers Placement Service.

LWPS is the new "instrument of mission" the United Lutheran Church in America has set up to register (1) opportunities for lay workers in a variety of capacities under church auspices and (2) qualified lay persons seeking work in the church. Headquarters office is in the Board of Higher Education at 231 Madison Avenue, New York

City 16. Branch offices are being set up in the synods of the future Lutheran Church in America.

LWPS offices are prepared to fill numerous kinds of personnel needs as soon as they know of them. For instance, of twelve organists currently on file with the New York office, eight are from other areas of United States and would very likely give preference to opportunities in their own regions. Requests for all kinds of personnel are also on file. For example, right now every kind of staff person is being sought for several hospitals and homes for older people in California, Nebraska and Pennsylvania.

Congregations, institutions and organizations seeking personnel, or qualified men and women seeking work under church auspices, should register with the synod Lay Workers Placement Service. When opportunities or personnel are not available in the synod, or where there is no LWPS office, registration should be made in New York